REMARKS

In response to the Office Action dated May 3, 2005, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims. The courteous interview conducted by Examiner Arani with Applicant's representative is noted with appreciation. The substance of that interview is incorporated in the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

In the most recent Office Action, the rejection of all pending claims as being anticipated by the Nezu patent (U.S. Patent No. 5,638,511) was maintained. In so doing, the Office Action identifies two points of argument presented by Applicant in his previous response, and explains why the Examiner did not find them to be persuasive. It is respectfully submitted, however, that the reference does not anticipate the *claimed* subject matter, when the claims are considered as a whole.

With regard to the first point of distinction argued by the Applicant, the Office Action states that the Nezu patent discloses an output means 2 that receives a collation key, and that this structure corresponds to the claimed receiving unit, regardless of the fact that the collation key is not received along with the print job data. It is respectfully submitted that, as interpreted, the output means 2 corresponds more closely to the claimed "password taking unit." As pointed out in Applicant's previous response, the password is physically transported to the print server by the user, e.g. on a floppy disk, to enable a stored print job to be printed. In this capacity, the print server functions as the password taking unit, now recited as the password accepting unit. It is respectfully submitted that the output means 2 of the reference cannot be interpreted to be *both* the receiving unit and the password taking unit, since to do so effectively reads one of these limitations out of the claim.

During the course of the interview, the Examiner indicated that he was viewing the floppy disk drive on the controller as the password taking unit. It is respectfully submitted that a person of skill in the art would not consider the floppy disk drive to be a separate element that performs a different function from the controller as a whole. Rather, it is a component of the controller that operates with the remaining controller structure to accept the password that is physically transported by the user. Thus, the controller with its associated floppy disk drive together function as the password taking unit. The controller does not also function as the claimed receiving unit, separately from its function as the password taking unit. It is respectfully submitted that the Nezu patent does not disclose a receiving unit that is distinct from the password taking unit.

The Examiner indicated that this distinction between the claimed receiving unit and the controller of the Nezu patent could be clarified by reciting that the password is received with the print job data. Pursuant to the Examiner's suggestion, independent claims 1, 8 and 15 have been amended accordingly.

Furthermore, even if the reference can be interpreted to disclose a receiving unit, it still does not anticipate the claims. As noted in Applicant's previous response, claim 1 recited a storage device that stores print job data and a received password in correspondence with each other, a password taking unit, and a controller that permits the print job data to be printed when the password taken by the password taking unit matches the password stored in the storage device. The claim further recites:

> said controller permits, when the password taken by said
> password taking unit is a prescribed password different
> from the password stored in said storage device in

correspondence with the print job data, a prescribed
operation on the print job data stored in said storage
device.

In responding to Applicant's arguments relating to this claimed subject matter, the Office Action states that the Nezu patent discloses that when the retention time for holding a print job has exceeded the maximum retention period, the designated job is set to either a mode of being deleted from the internal spool or a mode of being treated and output as a print job, with particular reference to column 6, lines 25-33, and column 30, lines 13-20 of the patent. It is respectfully submitted, however, that these portions of the patent do not disclose, nor otherwise anticipate, the *claimed* subject matter.

More particularly, claim 1 recited that a prescribed operation on the print job data, e.g. cancellation of the print job data or printing of the print job data, is permitted "when the password taken by said password taking unit is a prescribed password different from the password stored ... in correspondence with the print job data." In contrast, the Nezu patent discloses that the deletion or printing of the designated job occurs automatically at the end of the maximum retention period. It does not disclose that these operations occur as a result of the entry of a password, particularly a prescribed password that is different from the password stored in conjunction with print job data. In other words, in accordance with the claimed invention, user input of a prescribed password initiates the prescribed operation on the print job data. In the system of the Nezu patent, no such user input is employed. Rather, the triggering action in that system is the expiration of the maximum retention period.

Thus, while the Nezu patent discloses the deletion or printing of a print job that has been temporarily held in storage for a certain period of time, the mechanism by which those operations occur is different from that of the present invention. The Nezu patent employs the expiration of a predetermined time period, whereas claim 1 recited that the prescribed operation occurs "when the password taken by said password taking unit is a prescribed password different from the password stored in said storage device." Accordingly, the Nezu patent does not anticipate the claimed subject matter in its original form, or as now amended.

The statement of rejection also refers to the Nezu patent's disclosure of a master code, at column 5, lines 31-37. However, as pointed out in Applicant's previous response, this master code has nothing to do with the deletion or printing of a print job _data_ stored in a storage device. Rather, the master code relates to an alternate embodiment of the invention, in which print jobs, i.e. physical pieces of paper, are stored in locked stackers. This master code enables a manager to remove a printed job from a locked stacker, to prevent long-term occupation of the stacker by the job. Thus, the function of the master code is to enable physical access to a _printed_ job at some period _after_ the printing operation has occurred. In contrast, claim 1 recites that the prescribed password permits a prescribed operation on print job _data_ that is stored in the storage device.

Claim 1 recites that there is a relationship between the entry of the prescribed password and the operation that is performed on the print job data stored in the storage device. The Nezu patent does not disclose any relationship between the master code and the deletion or printing of job data at the end of the maximum retention period. For this additional reason, therefore, the Nezu patent cannot be
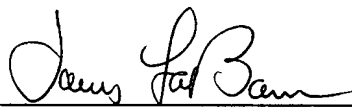
interpreted to anticipate the subject matter of claim 1. For analogous reasons, the

subject matter of claims 8 and 15, as well as the dependent claims, is not anticipated

by the Nezu patent.

For at least the foregoing reasons, therefore, it is respectfully submitted that

all pending claims are patentably distinct from the Nezu patent. Reconsideration and

withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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